



Testimony of Pamela Mautte
Director, Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council and member of
The Connecticut Prevention Network
In support of
HB 5053- AN ACT INCREASING ACCESS TO OVERDOSE REVERSAL DRUGS

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Pamela Mautte and I am the Director of the Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council and a member of the Connecticut Prevention Network.

I am offering this testimony **in support of HB 5053- An Act Increasing Access to Overdose Reversal Drugs**. Fatal drug overdoses are now the leading cause of injury death in the United States, surpassing both car crashes and homicides. Opioid overdoses can be reversed with the timely administration of an opioid antagonist, a medication more commonly called Naloxone. First responders can save lives by having access to this medication also known as a “rescue drug”. These public safety professionals have quick response times to emergency calls and have the opportunity to reverse overdoses and save lives immediately.

The Greater Valley Substance Abuse Action Council serves 11 cities and towns of Ansonia, Bethany, Derby, Orange, Oxford, Seymour, Shelton, Milford, New Haven, West Haven, and Woodbridge. In 2014, approximately 11% of the deaths involving opioids were in the aforementioned towns. This bill can help reverse the growing trend in communities across CT.

Many of Connecticut’s communities’ first responders do not have access Naloxone and need to wait until paramedic units arrive or the individual is taken to the hospital. This medication is approved by the FDA and can be administered by injection or via nasal spray. The drug has no abuse potential and counteracts the life-threatening effects of an overdose allowing the victim to breathe normally after it has been administered. However, this is a temporary drug that wears off in 20 to 90 minutes, making it essential to seek additional medical assistance after it has been administered.

Many of the paramedics and other first responders who I’ve spoken with throughout the State that have access to this medication, report they use it frequently and it is easy to use.

I urge you to support this important bill and provide access to all first responders.

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